

# Isra Black

## 1. Areas of specialisation

---

Healthcare law; normative jurisprudence; practical ethics.

## 2. Areas of competence

---

Criminal law; law and philosophy of human rights; normative ethics; public law, tort law

## 3. Current Employment

---

2016- York Law School, The University of York  
**Lecturer in Law (1.0 FTE)**  
I am on an Academic, Research and Teaching career pathway.

## 4. Education

---

2016 King's College London  
**PhD Law and Ethics**  
**Pass without corrections**  
Thesis: 'Better off dead? Best interests physician assisted death'  
*I defend a common law model for lawful physician assisted death in England and Wales.*  
Examiners: Professor Emily Jackson and Professor Richard Huxtable  
Supervision: Professor Penney Lewis and Dr John Stanton-Ife  
Funding: Arts and Humanities Research Council

2009 King's College London  
**MA Medical Ethics and Law**  
**Distinction; Sir Eric Scowen Prize for Best Student**

2008 King's College London  
**LLB English and French Law**  
**2:1**

2008 Université de Paris I, Panthéon Sorbonne  
**Licence/Master 1 Droits français et anglais**  
**11.1/20**

## 5. Publications

---

### 5.1. Papers under review

---

### 5.2. Papers in progress

---

1. **Isra Black**, 'Physician-assisted death through the medical exception' (draft available).

2. **Isra Black** and Ralf Jox, 'Voluntary stopping of eating and drinking, palliative support, and moral uncertainty (draft available) (lead author; 80:20 contribution).
3. **Isra Black**, Lisa Forsberg, Anthony Skelton, 'Adolescent refusals of life prolonging treatment and transformative experience' (conference paper available).
4. Anthony Skelton, Lisa Forsberg, **Isra Black**, 'Adolescent refusals of life-prolonging medical treatment: a welfarist proposal' (outline available).

### 5.3. Journal articles

---

1. **Isra Black**, 'Refusing Life Prolonging Medical Treatment and the ECHR' (2018) 38(2) OJLS
2. **Isra Black** and Asgeir Helgason, 'Using motivational interviewing to facilitate death talk in end-of-life care: an ethical analysis' (2018) 17 BMC Palliative Care 51 (lead author; 80:20 contribution)
3. Ralf J Jox, **Isra Black**, Gian Domenico Borasio, and Johanna Anneser, 'Voluntary stopping of eating and drinking: is medical support ethically justified?' 15(1) BMC Med 186 (70:10:10:10 contribution).
4. **Isra Black** and Lisa Forsberg, 'Would it be ethical to use motivational interviewing to increase family consent to deceased solid organ donation?' (2014) 40(1) Journal of Medical Ethics 63-68; doi:10.1136/medethics-2013-101451 (jointly authored; equal contribution).
5. Penney Lewis and **Isra Black**, 'Adherence to the Request Criterion in Jurisdictions where Assisted Dying is Lawful? A Review of the Criteria and Evidence in the Netherlands, Belgium, Oregon and Switzerland' (2013) 41(4) Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics 885-898; doi:10.1111/jlme.12098. (jointly authored; equal contribution).
6. Penney Lewis and **Isra Black**, 'Reporting and scrutiny of reported cases in four jurisdictions where assisted dying is lawful: a review of the evidence in the Netherlands, Belgium, Oregon and Switzerland' (2013) 13(4) Medical Law International 221-239; doi:10.1177/0968533213508973 (jointly authored; equal contribution).

### 5.4. Case commentary

---

7. Isra Black, 'Existential Suffering and The Extent of the Right to Physician Assisted Suicide in Switzerland: *Gross v Switzerland*' (2014) 22(1) Medical Law Review 109-118; doi:10.1093/medlaw/fwt038.  
  
Isra Black, 'A postscript to *Gross v Switzerland*' (2014) 22(4) Medical Law Review 656; doi:10.1093/medlaw/fwu035; *Addendum following ECtHR Grand Chamber judgment.*
8. Isra Black, 'Suicide assistance for mentally disordered individuals in Switzerland and the State's positive obligation to facilitate dignified suicide: *Haas c Suisse*' (2012) 20(1) Medical Law Review 157-166; doi:10.1093/medlaw/fwr033.

### 5.5. Contributions to edited books

---

9. Isra Black, 'An advance decision to refuse treatment following the permanent loss of capacity to refuse life sustaining treatment and commentary' in Celia Kitinger and Penney Lewis (eds)

*Advance Decisions to Refuse Treatment* (working title) (forthcoming); Available on website: [israblack.com/papers.html](http://israblack.com/papers.html).

## 5.6. Commissioned papers

---

10. Penney Lewis and **Isra Black**, ‘The effectiveness of legal safeguards in jurisdictions that allow assisted dying’, Briefing Paper for the Commission on Assisted Dying (2012) <<http://is.gd/CvrGuY>> (jointly authored; equal contribution).

## 6. Impact

---

1. Scottish Parliament Information Centre, Assisted dying and suicide in other jurisdictions (2015) <<http://is.gd/sphscad>>. *Reporting and scrutiny of reported cases in four jurisdictions where assisted dying is lawful...* (jointly authored with Penney Lewis) was cited in the the SPICe briefing paper for the Health and Sport Committee during consideration of the Assisted Suicide (Scotland) Bill.
2. Lara Giddings and Nick McKim, *Voluntary Assisted Dying: A Proposal for Tasmania* (2013) <<http://is.gd/qjHYSZ>>. *The Briefing Paper for the Commission on Assisted Dying that I jointly authored with Penney Lewis is cited over 50 times in the Premier of Tasmania’s Consultation Paper on assisted dying.*
3. The Commission on Assisted Dying, *The current legal status of assisted dying is inadequate and incoherent* (2012) <<http://is.gd/scWPoi>>. *The Briefing Paper for the Commission on Assisted Dying is heavily cited (over 25 references) in the Commission’s final report.*

## 7. Previous Employment

---

### 7.1. Research

---

- Karolinska Institutet, Department of Public Health Sciences
- 2016- **Postdoctoral Research Associate (1.0 FTE)**  
 I worked on the ethical justification for behavioural interventions in palliative care whose aim is to enable patients at the end of their lives to disclose diagnosis and prognosis to close personal relations. My position was part of the ‘Meeting men and their significant others in palliative cancer care’ project, funded by the Kamprad Family Foundation.
- 2015 Technische Universität München, Klinikum Rechts der Isar University Hospital  
**Postdoctoral Research Associate (0.6 FTE)**  
 I worked on the law and ethics of end of life decision-making, with a particular focus on (advance) decisions to refuse life prolonging medical treatment under European human rights law. I also wrote on patients’ voluntary refusal of food and drink and its implications for palliative care. My position was funded by ‘ALS-CarE’, a multi-million euro EU Joint Programme – Neurodegenerative Disease Research project.
- 2012- King’s College London, School of Law, Centre of Medical Law & Ethics  
 2011 **Research Assistant (Part-Time)**  
 I provided research assistance for the project ‘Prospective legal immunity, vulnerability, and assisted dying’ whose principal investigators were Professor Penney Lewis, Professor Roger Brownsword, and Professor Geneva Richardson. Following a conference in 2011, I authored a report of the proceedings for the funder. And in

2012, I peer reviewed articles for a special edition of the *King's Law Journal* (2012) 23(2).

2011 King's College London, School of Law, Centre of Medical Law & Ethics  
**Research Assistant** (Part-Time)  
Penney Lewis and I were commissioned by Demos to author a briefing paper for the Commission on Assisted Dying on 'The effectiveness of legal safeguards in jurisdictions that allow assisted dying'. It has been quite influential.

2014- Karolinska Institutet, Motivational Interviewing Coding Laboratory  
2009 **Research Affiliate**  
I worked in group researching the Ethics of Motivational Interviewing. I also reviewed article manuscripts on Motivational Interviewing and quality assurance of psychotherapy prior to submission and post-peer review.

## 7.1. Teaching

---

2015- King's College London, Dickson Poon School of Law  
2011 **Visiting Lecturer in Law** (part-time)  
**Undergraduate:** For 2014/15, I taught tutorials on *Criminal Law* (compulsory, first-year, module) and supervised dissertations on the *Medical Law* (elective, third-year, module) *Law at the End of Life* pathway. Between 2011 and 2014, I delivered the majority of teaching (both seminars and dissertation supervision) and assessment (exam and dissertation) for *Medical Law*.

**Postgraduate:** I assessed exams and coursework on the *Law at the End of Life 1 & 2* and *Medical Law 1 Modules* for the *MA Medical Ethics and Law* programme. I also assessed dissertations and taught an Introduction to Law seminar for students without a law background.

2015- University of Chichester, Department of Theology and Religion  
2013 **Associate Lecturer in Ethics** (part-time)  
I jointly convened *Bioethics* (an elective, third year undergraduate, half-module). My responsibilities included module design, leading seminars and lectures, setting and assessing coursework and exams. I also produced the virtual learning environment.

## 8. Oral presentations

---

### 8.1. Conferences

---

1. Isra Black, 'Transformative experience and adolescent capacity to refuse life-prolonging medical treatment' (2017) International Conference on End of Life.
2. Anthony Skelton, Lisa Forsberg, and **Isra Black**, 'Adolescent refusals of life-prolonging medical treatment: a welfarist proposal' (2017) Society for Applied Philosophy.
3. **Isra Black**, Lisa Forsberg, and Anthony Skelton, 'Transformative experience and adolescent capacity to refuse life-prolonging medical treatment' (2017) Canadian Society for the Study of Practical Ethics.

4. Anthony Skelton, Lisa Forsberg, and **Isra Black**, 'Adolescent refusals of life-prolonging medical treatment: a welfarist proposal' (2017) Canadian Philosophical Association.
5. **Isra Black**, 'The permissibility of palliative care for individuals who voluntarily stop eating and drinking' (2016) International Society of Utilitarian Studies (ISUS) Conference XIV
6. **Isra Black** and Ralf Jox, 'When and how I shan't live: decisions to refuse life prolonging medical intervention and article 8 ECHR' (2015) Society of Legal Scholars Conference.
7. **Isra Black** and Ralf Jox, 'When and how I shan't die: advance decisions to refuse treatment as a human right' (2015) WG Hart Legal Workshop on 'Law and the Ageing of Humankind'.
8. **Isra Black**, 'Best interests (physician) assisted death', (2014) Society of Legal Scholars Conference.
9. **Isra Black** and Lisa Forsberg, Teresa Moyers, Carolina Yahne, Allan Zuckoff, Plenary Session: 'How can we distinguish between ethical and unethical applications of MI?', (2014) Fourth International Conference on Motivational Interviewing.
10. **Isra Black** and Lisa Forsberg, 'Increasing Family Consent to Deceased Solid Organ Donation using Motivational Interviewing', (2012) Third International Conference on Motivational Interviewing.
11. Lisa Forsberg and **Isra Black**, 'Workshop: The Ethics of Motivational Interviewing II', (2012) Third International Conference on Motivational Interviewing.
12. Lisa Forsberg and **Isra Black**, 'Workshop: Motivational Interviewing and Medical Ethics', (2010) Second International Conference on Motivational Interviewing.

## **8.2. Invited talks**

---

1. **Isra Black**, 'Transformative experience and adolescent capacity to refuse life-prolonging medical treatment' (2018) Leicester Law School, University of Leicester.
2. **Isra Black**, 'Using motivational interviewing to facilitate death talk in end-of-life care: an ethical analysis', (2018) Ethox Centre, University of Oxford.
3. **Isra Black**, 'Voluntary stopping of eating and drinking and the permissibility of palliative support', (2016) Higher Seminar, Department of Philosophy, Stockholm University.
4. **Isra Black**, 'Physician assisted death through the medical exception', (2016) Seminar, Stockholm Centre for Healthcare Ethics.
5. **Isra Black**, 'Refusing medicine as a human right', (2015) Public Lecture, Institute of Ethics, History and Theory of Medicine/Philosophy Department, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität.
6. **Isra Black**, 'Best interests physician assisted death', (2015) Work in Progress Seminar, Uehiro Centre for Practical Ethics, University of Oxford.
7. **Isra Black**, 'Best interests physician assisted death', (2015) Department of Philosophy Seminar, Linköping University.

8. Isra Black, 'Best interests physician assisted death', (2015) Health Ethics and Law Seminar, University of Southampton.
9. Isra Black, 'Best interests (physician) assisted death', (2015) Seminar, Institute of Ethics, History and Theory of Medicine, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität.
10. Isra Black, 'An Assisted Dying (Scotland) Act and criterion expansion', *The Assisted Suicide (Scotland) Bill: Does Scotland Need to Legislate?* Mason Institute (University of Edinburgh)/Ampersand Advocates symposium (2014).
11. Isra Black, 'The Legal Regulation of Assisted Dying in England and Wales and Europe', (2013) Royal College of Anaesthetists.
12. Isra Black, 'Legal Aspects of Suicide in Palliative Care', (2012) St Christopher's Hospice.
13. Isra Black, 'Criminal Law Prohibitions on Assisted Dying', (2011) King's College London Think Tank Society.

## 9. Media

---

1. Contributor to 'This Man Wants Doctors To Euthanize Him Because He Can't Accept His Sexuality' *Broadly* (10 Jun 2016) <<http://is.gd/VuTEc3>> (Solicited).
2. Isra Black, 'Most people want it, but the UK isn't ready to legalise assisted dying' *The Conversation* (28 May 2015) <<http://is.gd/5S0SoE>> (Solicited).
3. Isra Black, 'Podcast: Britain's assisted dying bill reaches the Lords as opinion remains divided' *Voice of Russia* (18 July 2014) <<http://is.gd/3bhqxx>> (Solicited).
4. Isra Black, 'Assisted suicide bill is laudable, but poorly drafted' *The Conversation* (25 March 2014) <<http://is.gd/OYLR4P>> (Solicited).
5. Isra Black, 'Right-to-Die Campaign: Hope for 'Martin' after Court Rejects Lawful Euthanasia in Nicklinson-Lamb Case?' *International Business Times* (London, 02 August 2013) <<http://is.gd/7aFO44>> (Solicited).
6. Penney Lewis and **Isra Black**, 'Podcast: Tony Nicklinson's legacy lives on in right-to-die campaign' *King's College London* (5 September 2012) <<http://is.gd/q9JSh5>>.
7. Isra Black, 'Tony Nicklinson: Can Law Change on Assisted Dying and Protect Vulnerable?' *International Business Times* (London, 24 August 2012) <<http://is.gd/csu1an>> (Solicited).
8. Isra Black, 'Mark O'Donnell Show' *BBC Radio Wiltshire* (23 August 2012). *Interview on assisted death following the death of Tony Nicklinson* (Solicited).
1. Isra Black, 'Tony Nicklinson: Judiciary Should Stop Looking to Parliament for Legal Change' *International Business Times* (London, 20 August 2012) <<http://is.gd/nt6kb2>> (Solicited).

## 10. Grants/Scholarships

---

1. Wellcome Trust/University of Edinburgh (2016), **Early Career Bursary (£1,000)**. *For travel and registration to attend the International Association of Bioethics Conference 2016. Declined.*
2. Department of Philosophy, Stockholm University (2016), **Visiting Fellow**. *Residency for two semesters.*
3. Fondation Brocher (2014), **Visiting Researcher**. *Residency from July-August 2015 with Lisa Forsberg and Anthony Skelton.*
4. Wellcome Trust (2013), **Small Grant (£3,175)**. *For Postgraduate Bioethics Conference 2013 with Lisa Forsberg and James Wilson.*
5. Society for Applied Philosophy (2013), **Event Funding (£1,500)**. *For Postgraduate Bioethics Conference 2013 with Lisa Forsberg and James Wilson.*
6. Fondation Brocher (2012), **Visiting Researcher**. *Residency from July-September 2013.*
7. Arts and Humanities Research Council (2010), **Doctoral Award (£60,000)**.
8. Honourable Society of the Middle Temple (2010), **Master Diplock Scholarship (£4,000)**. *Declined.*
9. King's College London (2010), **King's Alumni Bursary (20% of PhD tuition fees)**. *Declined.*

## 11. Other Professional Activities

---

Co-convenor of Society of Legal Scholars Medical Law section (2017-2020)

Peer review for the following academic journals: *Bioethics*, *BMC Medical Ethics*, *BMJ*, *Health Care Analysis*, *Journal of Medical Ethics*, *Medical Law Review*.

Peer review of grant applications for the Arts and Humanities Research Council.

Convenor of the York Law School *Super relaxed seminar series*.

Convenor of the Centre of Medical Law and Ethics, King's College London, Research Seminars (with Lisa Forsberg) (2013-2015), and the Postgraduate Bioethics Conference 2013 (with Lisa Forsberg and James Wilson)

Member of the MRC Centre for Transplantation interdisciplinary research group, King's College London (2013-2014), and the ESRC Advance Decision-Making in Healthcare working group, York-Cardiff-Warwick (2012-2014).

Member of the Society for Applied Philosophy and Society of Legal Scholars.

Student member of the Honourable Society of the Middle Temple.

President of the King's College London Graduate Legal Research Society (2011-12).

## 12. References

---

Professor John Coggon (external referee)  
Professor of Law and the Philosophy of Public Health  
Faculty of Business, Law and Art  
University of Southampton  
[John.Coggon@soton.ac.uk](mailto:John.Coggon@soton.ac.uk)

Professor Richard Huxtable (thesis examiner)  
Professor of Medical Ethics and Law  
Centre for Ethics in Medicine  
School of Social and Community Medicine  
University of Bristol  
[R.Huxtable@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:R.Huxtable@bristol.ac.uk)

Professor Emily Jackson (thesis examiner)  
Professor of Law  
Department of Law  
London School of Economics  
[e.jackson@lse.ac.uk](mailto:e.jackson@lse.ac.uk)

Professor Penney Lewis (thesis supervisor)  
Professor of Law  
Dickson Poon School of Law  
Co-director  
Centre of Medical Law and Ethics  
King's College London  
[penney.lewis@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:penney.lewis@kcl.ac.uk)

Associate Professor Anthony Skelton (collaborator and philosophy referee)  
Associate Professor of Philosophy  
Department of Philosophy  
Associate Director  
Rotman Institute of Philosophy  
Western University  
[askelto4@uwo.ca](mailto:askelto4@uwo.ca)